

Minutes of 19th Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board Meeting, Dated 07-10-2022

The nineteenth (19th) meeting of the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board was held on 07.10.2022 at the Board's office, Dehradun under the chairmanship of Shri Rajiv Bhartari, Chairman, Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board, Dehradun.

The member secretary in his introduction reiterated the basic tasks of the Biodiversity Board. He expressed his concern about timely accomplishment of revision/upgradation/fine-tuning/ground-truthing and validation of the PBRs of BMCs totaling 7991 in number. He also insists upon the need of extra man power and appropriate infrastructure immediately required for this gargantuan task. In particular, he highlighted the urgency of getting a formal structure of the board approved by the Government. He also emphasized the need for launching a massive awareness campaign among the stakeholders. The need for sharing benefits with the local community was also highlighted.

The following board members or their representatives were present in the meeting **(Annexure-1)**.

Decisions were taken in the meeting after deliberating according to the agenda, which are as follows: -

Agenda-1: Regarding approval of the board on the permanent structure of the board:

It was suggested by the chairman and agreed by all the members that the structure of the board which is currently under consideration should be sent to Government for further action.

Agenda-2: Regarding adopting Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for disbursing of Access and Benefit Sharing Fund to the BMCs against their proposals in accordance with the objectives spelt out in the BD Act:

The BMCs or cluster of BMCs selected as per the selection criteria suggested below will be supported by board staff and the local forest staff in formulating project proposals in consultation with the local community. The initiative of the local communities will be encouraged, nurtured and supported by the board. The elementary proposals will further be presented before the committee constituted for the purpose which will scrutinize the proposal of the BMCs or cluster of BMCs and decide the amount to be released for the implementation. The board has suggested the following criteria for the selection of BMCs or cluster of BMCs for activities under the proposed project and to be considered for disbursing funds under Benefit Sharing Obligations:

- BMCs pertaining to priority conservation areas such as those around the regions of biodiversity hotspots, sacred grooves, Conservation Reserves and the likes.
- BMCs pertaining to areas with viable commercially utilizable bio-resources which are under the threat of depletion.
- Relatively motivated BMCs with considerable willingness to plan and execute the projects for the activities as suggested by the BD Act in synchronization with the local community.
- Areas where significant knowledge base exists out of possibly past scientific works done in consultation with the local community or otherwise.
- Areas pertaining to the bio-resources commercially utilized as reflected in the list of bio-resources as furnished by the traders and industries.
- Conservation of biodiversity by way of livelihood enhancement and addressing vulnerabilities.
- Areas where it is possible to supplement funds available from other sources such as ecodevelopment, van panchayat, or other state or central Government schemes so that the overall project is more viable and substantial for the socio-economic development of the region.

Agenda-3: Regarding arrangement of an experienced account personnel for the accounts and other associated works purpose of the board:

It was agreed that a stop-gap arrangement can be made immediately by way of asking suitable person from the relevant agencies approved by the Government and subsequently, a suitable personnel should be recruited after due process of selection.

Agenda-4: Regarding project proposal for biodiversity assessment and capacity building of BMCs in Rathuwadab landscape of Kalagarh forest division:

It was suggested that the task may be assigned to qualified experts who should be engaged after due process of selection. The proposal should be aimed at biodiversity assessment and related objectives.

Agenda-5: Regarding the budget of board F.Y. 2021-2022.

The income and expenditure summary for the F.Y. 2021-2022 is as follows:

Account Name	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure
Board Fund Account		1,41,57,760.00	1,27,49,583.00
ABS Fund		1,88,06,155.00	7,91,652.00
NMHS Fund	15,72,633.28	52,77,820.00	55,39,259.00
Secure Himalaya Fund	99,08,943.00	-	47,66,744.00



The board has approved the financial statements for the financial year 2021-2022. It was also agreed that a large scale workshop aimed that massive awareness campaign among the most affected stakeholders under the Secure Himalaya project will be organized in March, 2023.

Agenda-6: Regarding increment in emoluments of Research personnel engaged with the board.

Presently, the wages to the concerned staff are given by Uttarakhand Purv Sainik Kalyan Nigam Ltd. (UPNL) from budget provided by State Government. In addition, funds have also been available by the NBA in the successive years and it has accorded its approval to spend this sum towards revision/upgradation/fine-tuning/ground-truthing and validation of the PBRs. It was agreed that the corresponding persons should be paid stipend from the above source as per the rules of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), University Grant Commission (UGC), Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) or likes in consonance with their qualifications.

Agenda-7: Any other points from the Chairman of the board:

The compliance report on the minutes of the meeting held on 05 February 2021 under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary, Forest Environment and Climate Change, Government of Uttarakhand in relation to review of the activities of Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board.

It was pointed out by the Member Secretary that some of the points have already been complied with and the rest are being addressed through the actions stipulated under various agenda points as enumerated above.


7/11/22
(R.N. Jha)

**Member Secretary
Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board
Dehradun**